

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 SANA 01459 280917Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 SP-02 /045 W
-----010701 281032Z /17
R 280725Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4263

UNCLAS SANA 1459

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SHUM, YE
SUBJECT: INQUIRY INTO STATUS OF JEWS IN YEMEN

REF: SANA 1252

1. PURSUANT TO REFTTEL, AMBASSADOR RAISED SUBJECT OF VISAS FOR AMERICAN JEWS TO VISIT THEIR CORELIGIONIST IN YEMEN WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER AHMAD HAYDAR ON SATURDAY, 25 MARCH. HAYDAR LISTENED TO BRIEF EXPOSITION AND SAID HE SAW NO PROBLEM, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF INVITATION OF YAR PRESIDENT GHASHMI FOR YEMENI JEWS TO RETURN.

2. DCM GOT SAME REASSURANCES AND HE INDEPENDENTLY RAISED SUBJECT WITH IBRAHIM AL-KIBSI, WHO IS SLATED TO BE ANOTHER DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, AND WITH DEPUTY OF PROTOCOL, YAHYA AL-SHARAFI.

3. ALL THREE MEN POINTED OUT THAT TRAVEL IN NORTH WAS LIKELY TO BE DIFFICULT FOR REASONS COMPLETELY BEYOND CONTROL OF GOVERNMENT. TWO OF THE THREE ALSO SAID THEY FELT THAT THERE WERE LESS THEN 100 JEWS IN ALL OF YEMEN, MOSTLY IN HADDA AND SAADA.

4. AMBASSADOR AND DCM BOTH NOTED THAT WILLINGNESS OF OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES LIKE EGYPT AND SYRIA TO RECEIVE
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AMERICAN JEWS HAD RESULTED IN FAVORABLE PRESS NOTICE IN THE UNITED STATES; RESUFSAL MIGHT BE NOTED UNFAVORABLY. WE ALSO SAID WE THOUGHT PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS ENTIRELY FOR FRATERNAL AND RELIGIOUS REASONS AND POINTED OUT THAT EMBASSY WOULD BE OBLIGED TO SUPPORT ANY REQUEST BY US CITIZENS FOR A VISA TO YEMEN WHEN PURPOSE SEEMED, AS IN THIS CASE, TO BE NON POLITICAL AND PROPER.

COMMENT: DESPITE OFFICIAL ASSURANCES GIVEN ABOVE,
YEMENI SENSITIVITIES CONCERNING JEWS WHO STILL LIVE HERE
ARE WELL DEVELOPED. WE HAVE HEARD STORY OF TOURIST
WHO STRAYED IN SMALL JEWISH VILLAGE IN NORTH AND TOOK
PICTURES WHICH ARE EVERYWHERE ELSE WELCOMED AND EVEN
ENCOURAGED BY NON CONFORMIST YEMENIS. IN THIS
CASE, HOWEVER FILM WAS LATER CONFISCATED.
SCOTES

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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